

## Sexual Abuse & Misconduct Policy

CCC desires to be a safe place for all children, youth and adults who attend any activity or ministry. CCC will not tolerate any abuse or neglect. All volunteers who participate in church-sponsored activities will be required to comply with CCC's Sexual Abuse & Misconduct Policy, which states:

*“Physical contact is important to all of us and especially to those with special needs as touching suggests friendship. Jesus touched people who were blind, deaf, mentally and physically ill in order to communicate love and healing. A touch from a loving person can cut through the isolation some children with disabilities feel. As a church we strive to create a safe environment for our attendees in which all physical contact is healthy, edifying and loving. Therefore, all volunteers at CCC are required to act in accordance with federal and state laws, as well as God’s higher standards of conduct, regarding physical contact with attendees with special needs. The church will uphold and enforce to the best of its abilities a strict policy that prohibits unwanted touching (sensual, exploitative or uncomfortable or inappropriate in nature) of attendees with special needs. We define appropriate touching as physical contact that reflects the love of Christ. Appropriate touching includes side hugs and appropriate frontal hugs, pats on the back, high-fives & fist-bumps. Touching should be initiated as a response to the students need for comfort or encouragement, not based on the volunteer’s emotional need. Physical contact & affection should be given only in observable places and should not give the appearance of wrong doing. Physical contact should also not be forced – for some students, touch is healing. For others with sensory issues or past experiences where touch was harmful, it can cause anxiety.”*

### Reporting Suspected Abuse or Neglect

It is the responsibility of CCC to report all cases of suspected abuse or neglect to the proper legal authorities within 12 hours of it being discovered. When it becomes necessary to report suspected abuse or neglect the protection of the student must be the most important concern. Failure to report could lead to liability on the part of the church, the

observer or both. The reporter must report suspected abuse if they determine “probable cause”, which means that the available facts when viewed in light of surrounding circumstances would cause a reasonable person to believe an individual was abused or neglected. A report based on probable cause does not require proof that abuse or neglect has actually occurred; rather, it is a request for an assessment of the condition of the individual.

CCC has adopted the following guidelines for reporting suspected abuse:

1) upon observing or suspecting abuse, the volunteer shall immediately do the following:

- make sure the individual’s safety and comfort are secured
- make sure the suspected abuser is safely away from the individual (if applicable)

2) report the abuse or neglect promptly to any staff member at CCC who is available (CHOSEN Coordinator, Children’s Ministry Pastor or staff, any CCC Pastor). To preserve confidentiality, it is important to discuss the incident initially only with a CCC staff member.